



## 52 Faith Practice Reflection Tips 2021-22

Here's an easy way to share helpful faith formation tips with your congregation! Each week, cut and paste one of the following tips into your church bulletin, post it on your website, email it, or post the text and image on your church's social media. We'll add new images to the tips regularly, so keep checking back. Questions? Contact Megan Herrema, our communications coordinator, at [mherrema@crcna.org](mailto:mherrema@crcna.org).

### **This year's tips**

This year, tips will again focus on 12 faith practices, providing a Scripture passage to read and meditate on and three reflection or discussion starters. Encourage your congregation to use these for personal or family devotional time, in small groups, at council meetings, and in other gatherings.

### **Bookmarks**

If you'd like to use these tips in a different order than outlined here, we've bookmarked them by practice so you can easily find what you're looking for. **Please note** that a few of the tips are created for a specific event in the church year (beginning of Advent, Lent, etc), so you will need to modify those specific tips if you use them at another time of year.

- [Sabbath](#)
- [Gratitude](#)
- [Generosity](#)
- [Hospitality](#)
- [Engaging Scripture](#)
- [Justice and Mercy](#)
- [Listening](#)
- [Celebrating](#)
- [Prayer](#)
- [Wonder](#)
- [Remembering](#)
- [Service](#)

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### **For 9/5**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Sabbath:** Read Exodus 20:8-11 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What does the word “holy” mean in this context?
- Sabbath rest is God's gift to us. How might you receive that gift with gratitude?

- If your vocation doesn't require working on Sundays, are you able to put away your weekly work and celebrate sabbath? If not, what gets in your way? If your vocation does require you to work on Sundays, what other day or time period could you set aside to celebrate the gift of sabbath?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 9/5 tip\*](#)
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### **For 9/12**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Sabbath:** Read Mark 2:23-28 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What would a sabbath that is “made for you” look like? What would be life-giving? What would be restful? What would point you to God?
  - What role does food play in your sabbath celebration?
  - What kinds of activities would you like to avoid on the sabbath?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 9/12 tip\*](#)
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### **For 9/19**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Sabbath:** Read Luke 6:6-11 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- In what areas of your life do you need healing and restoration?
  - How might celebrating sabbath help you open your heart to letting Jesus “completely restore” and heal you?
  - How might your sabbath celebration include opportunities to extend healing and restoration to your neighbor?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 9/19 tip\*](#)
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### **For 9/26**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Sabbath:** Read Psalm 23 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Reflect on the words “I shall not want” (or, as *The Message* puts it, “I don’t need a thing.” How often do those words describe you?
  - Think about times when you were in “the valley of the shadow of death.” Did you feel God with you in those times? How?
  - How have you experienced God’s “goodness and mercy”? How might you be an agent of goodness and mercy to your neighbor or to your “enemies”?
  - [Download an image to share with the 9/26 tip](#)
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### **For 10/3**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Gratitude:** Read Psalm 100 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Did anything make you want to “shout for joy” this week? What was it, and how did you express gratitude to God?
  - What does it mean to you to be one of the “sheep of [God’s] pasture”?
  - How has God shown faithfulness to your family “through all generations”?
  - [Download an image to share with the 10/3 tip](#)
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### **For 10/10**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Gratitude:** Read Luke 17:11-19 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Why do you think the “other nine” didn’t express gratitude to Jesus for their healing? What might their reasons have been?
  - Do you recognize yourself in this story? Where?
  - How have you experienced healing in your life, whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual? How did you, or how might you, express your gratitude to God?
  - [Download and image to share with the 10/10 tip](#)
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### **For 10/17**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Gratitude:** Read Luke 7:36-38 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- If you can't remember a time when you didn't believe in God, it might be difficult to feel deeply what Jesus has done for you. How might you and other Christians recover a sense of wonder and gratitude for the sacrifice of Jesus' life?
  - This passage is full of vivid sensory images. Open a bottle of perfume or essential oil or burn a scented candle as you read the entire story again slowly, imagining that you were there in the room. What do you see, hear, smell, feel?
  - What act of gratitude might you be long overdue in carrying out?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 10/17 tip\*](#)
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### **For 10/24**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Gratitude:** Read Colossians 3:15-17 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.” Peace promotes gratitude; anxiety rarely does. How might you invite the peace of Christ into your heart more fully, in order that gratitude may flow more freely?
  - “Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Think of the things you do in a normal day or week. How might each of those things become an act of gratitude?
  - If there are kids in your home, or even if there aren't, write down the letters of the alphabet and try to think of things you're grateful for that start with each of those letters.
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 10/24 tip\*](#)
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### **For 10/31**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Gratitude:** Today is “Reformation Sunday.” Read “Ten Ways My Reformed Identity Shapes My Life” ([tinyurl.com/10WaysReformed](http://tinyurl.com/10WaysReformed)) and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- If you identify with the Reformed tradition, what difference does holding this worldview make in your daily life?
- What parts of the Reformed worldview especially spark gratitude in you?
- How might you more fully experience God's abundant grace so that you can live out of gratitude?
- [\*Download an image to share with the 10/31 tip\*](#)

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### For 11/7

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Generosity:** Read Acts 4:32-35 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- The early church was characterized by a spirit of generosity. How does today's church (or your own congregation) measure up? Do today's Christians have a reputation for generosity? In what ways is that true or untrue?
- What would it be like to share possessions with a group of people not related to you? What kinds of adjustments would that require—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually?
- Is this kind of communal living something to which all Christians should aspire? Why or why not?
- [\*Download an image to share with the 11/7 tip\*](#)

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### For 11/14

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Generosity:** Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Think back over the past year. Where have you “sown sparingly”? Where have you “sown generously”?
- How do you “decide in your heart” what and when to give? How intentional are those decisions?
- How might you find more joy in giving generously?
- [\*Download an image to share with the 11/14 tip\*](#)

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### For 11/21

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Generosity:** Read 1 John 3:16-18 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- How are you laying down your life for your brothers and sisters? Spend some time in self-reflection.
- This passage clearly ties love of our neighbor to sharing material possessions with people in need. How do you discover needs in your neighborhood, city, country, and world? What needs are you able to meet?

- How might you remind yourself daily of God’s generous love for you?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 11/21 tip\*](#)
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### **For 11/28**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Generosity:** Read John 3:16,17 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- As the season of Advent begins, how might you focus on God’s great love and generosity expressed in the act of Jesus being born here on earth?
  - What pictures do the words “eternal life” create in your mind?
  - Where does your heart find itself more often: feeling God’s generous grace, or feeling a sense of condemnation? Why do you think that is?
  - [\*Download an image to share with the 11/28 tip\*](#)
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### **For 12/5**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Hospitality:** Read Genesis 18:1-8 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- This passage is the first reference in the Bible to someone opening their home to others. How do Abraham’s actions set the tone for hospitality? What adjectives might you use to describe his welcome of the three strangers?
  - Have you ever been on the receiving end of lavish and heartfelt hospitality? What was it like? How did it make you feel?
  - Subsequent verses make it clear that Abraham was being visited by the Lord. How would you react if you answered the call of your doorbell and found Jesus waiting there? Spend a few minutes imagining this scenario.
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### **For 12/12**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Hospitality:** Read Leviticus 19:33-34 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Leviticus 19 is full of commands for how to be holy. One of those commands is to love strangers (in this case people who are from other lands) as you love yourself. How do you live out this command?

- Have you ever been a foreigner in another country? How did it feel? What was wonderful or exciting about it? What was uncomfortable or scary? Did anyone make you feel especially welcome? How?
  - What are some ways that you, your family, your church, your wider community, and your nation could love people from other lands as yourself?
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### **For 12/19**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Hospitality:** Read Luke 14:12-14 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- In this story, Jesus encourages us to offer hospitality to people who can not repay us. In your unique context, who might that be? How might you offer food, shelter, and protection to them?
  - How is a “feast” different from a meal or a donation of food? For ideas, watch the film *Babette’s Feast*.
  - How might we offer hospitality to “the least of these” (Matt. 25:40), even in a time of physical distancing?
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### **For 12/26**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Hospitality:** Read Luke 10:38-42 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Do you identify more with Martha or with Mary? Why?
  - In 1 Peter 4:9 we read, “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” While Martha was providing the important physical components of hospitality, she was feeling anxiety and resentment rather than joy, and she was spreading that feeling to others. Does offering hospitality ever cause you stress that you pass along to others? Why or why not? What might you do to experience more joy in providing hospitality?
  - What do you think Jesus meant by saying “Few things are needed—or indeed only one”?
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## For 1/2

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Engaging Scripture:** Read Psalm 1:1-2 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- The new year is an excellent time to form new habits of Scripture engagement. How might you organize your day to make room for spending more time with God’s Word?
  - What are some different ways of “meditating” on God’s Word? (One way is the ancient *lectio divina* method. If you’re not familiar with it, check out [tinyurl.com/FaithwardLectio](http://tinyurl.com/FaithwardLectio).)
  - Besides reading a printed Bible, what are some other media you might use to engage with God’s Word this year? (For one idea, check out the wonderful videos available at [bibleproject.com/explore](http://bibleproject.com/explore).)
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## For 1/9

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Engaging Scripture:** Read Deuteronomy 11:18-20 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- This passage envisions a community that is shaped and guided by God’s Word—one in which God’s people keep God’s Word continually in front of themselves and pass it on to others. How do the Christian communities you are a part of (such as family, friends, church, other groups) live out God’s commands in this passage?
  - How might you “fix God’s words” in places where you and others in your communities would see them often?
  - How might you share God’s Word with someone in one of your communities this week?
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## For 1/16

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Engaging Scripture:** Read Isaiah 55:10-11 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- The verses right before this passage are about forgiveness of sins, and the verses right after are about the joy of having the curse of sin lifted. How does this passage give you hope, both for your own life and for the world?
  - In what ways have you felt God’s Word helping you and those around you “bud and flourish”?
  - Where do you see God’s desires and purposes being accomplished today?
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### **For 1/23**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Engaging Scripture:** Read Luke 24:45-49 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Luke says, “He opened [the disciples’] minds so they could understand the Scriptures.” What do you think that revelation might have felt like to these friends of Jesus?
  - What does it mean to be a “witness” to the truths of the gospel? How do you (or might you) do that in your everyday life?
  - When Jesus says, “I am going to send you what my Father has promised. . . .” he is referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:8; 2:1-41). What difference does the Holy Spirit make in your life? Are there specific ways your life might change if you were more receptive to the Holy Spirit's presence and work in your life?
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### **For 1/30**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Engaging Scripture:** Read James 1:22-25 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- How might “merely listening to the word” cause us to deceive ourselves?
  - The command to “do what it says” is pretty plain. But what if we disagree about what God’s Word says or how to apply it? How do we find clarity?
  - What specific opportunities have you had recently to do what God’s Word says?
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### **For 2/6**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Justice and Mercy:** Read Micah 6:8 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Do you typically think of doing justice as a “requirement” of the Christian life? What does that mean to you?
  - What might it mean to “act justly and love mercy” in your various spheres of influence (home, work, school, church, community . . .)?
  - In what new ways do you feel God may be calling you to be a bringer of justice and mercy at this time in your life?
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### **For 2/13**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Justice and Mercy:** Read Isaiah 10:1-2 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What examples of unjust laws or oppressive decrees do you see in your community or your country?
  - Throughout the Bible, God’s voice rings out to support people who are poor and oppressed and to protect them from injustice. In your opinion, does the church’s passion for justice and mercy match God’s? Why or why not?
  - No political group or party can claim always to be on the side of justice and mercy. Keeping in mind the biblical vision of flourishing for all (shalom), how does your chosen political affiliation stack up? Challenge: talk about this with someone from a political party with which you are not affiliated.
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### **For 2/20**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Justice and Mercy:** Read Isaiah 58:9-10 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- A yoke is a type of harness used with a team of animals, typically oxen. Usually made of wood and iron, it’s heavy and rigid, and it restricts the animals’ freedom to move. In the Bible the word “yoke” is used to describe being bound to something or someone, for better or for worse. With this in mind, how would you describe “the yoke of oppression”?
  - How might your church, or another group of which you’re a part, begin to meet the needs of the oppressed and “do away with the yoke of oppression”? What practical steps might you take?
  - This passage puts “the pointing finger and malicious talk” on the same level as oppression. We are all guilty of judging and slandering others. What individuals or groups is it difficult for you to approach with compassion and mercy? How might you begin to change your perspective?
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### **For 2/27**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Justice and Mercy:** Read Revelation 21:1-4 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- This passage shares a vision of a new heaven and a new earth that is completely free from pain, sadness, and death. As the season of Lent begins this week, consider the many ways in which you and the communities you're a part of have sinned against God and neighbor. What would it be like to live in a world free from the results of sin?
  - How do the words "the old order of things has passed away" make you feel? Joyful? Uncertain? Filled with anticipation? Why?
  - Where do you see glimmers of the new heaven and new earth today?
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### **For 3/6**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Listening:** Read Isaiah 55:3,10-11 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- In what ways does God speak to God's people today? List as many as you can.
  - How are you "giving ear" to God? How is your family doing this? How is your church listening to God?
  - How might you incorporate more silence into your day for the purpose of "giving ear" to God?
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### **For 3/13**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Listening:** Read Psalm 116:1-2 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Do you truly believe—with your heart as well as your head—that God listens to you?
  - How, when, and where do you speak to and listen to God?
  - How might you increasingly become someone who "inclines your ear" to others?
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### **For 3/20**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Listening:** Read James 1:19 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Being "quick to listen" is an enormous challenge in Western culture, where we value speaking over listening. Do you know someone who is an intentionally deep listener? How does interacting with that person make you feel?
- Is being "slow to speak" valued in your circles? Why or why not? How might you cultivate that virtue more deeply?

- Social media provides myriad examples of what happens when people are not “slow to become angry.” How have indignation and anger taken over our various interactions with each other, and what might we do to counteract that harmful tendency?
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### **For 3/27**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Listening:** Read Psalm 19:1-4 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- We often appreciate the beauty of creation, but how often do we truly see it as a communication from God?
  - How does God’s creation “pour forth speech” about God?
  - How might we become better listeners to the testimony of God’s creation?
  - How can each of us use our gifts and talents to help God’s creation flourish?
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### **For 4/3**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Celebrating:** Read Psalm 103:1-5 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- When you look at your “inmost being,” how often do you find yourself in “celebration mode”? What might you do to celebrate every day?
  - Can you picture yourself “crowned with love and compassion”? Try that during your next prayer time.
  - In what ways has God abundantly blessed you and those you love? List as many as you can.
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### **For 4/10**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Celebrating:** Read John 2:1-11 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- In *A Habit Called Faith* (Baker Books, 2021), Jen Pollock Michel writes, “Although Christians have a long and unfortunate history of making every pleasure a guilty one, this narrative [of the wedding at Cana] doesn’t tolerate asceticism for its own sake. No, it tells us that God can be as comfortable at a party as he is in the church pew—that our habits of faith can be as celebratory as they are contemplative” (p. 132). How celebratory are your own habits of faith?

- Can you picture Jesus celebrating and being joyful just as easily as you can picture Jesus preaching and being serious? Why or why not?
  - How might we invite Jesus to be at the center of significant celebrations today?
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### **For 4/17**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Celebrating:** Read Revelation 7:9-13 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Easter Sunday is the most important celebration of the Christian year, and this passage paints the ultimate picture of Christian celebration. Have you ever imagined what that day will be like? Give it a try.
  - How are you already cultivating a spirit of unity with people from “every nation, tribe, people and language”—people with whom you are destined to spend eternity?
  - How are worship and celebration entwined? What does this look like in your congregation?
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### **For 4/24**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Celebrating:** Read Luke 15:20-24 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- How would you feel if a child of yours who you thought was dead appeared on your doorstep, seeking your forgiveness?
  - If you were the father in this story, what would your celebration look like in today’s world?
  - What does this story tell you about God’s character?
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### **For 5/1**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Prayer:** Read Matthew 6:9-13 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- In *The Prayer of the Lord*, R.C. Sproul observes, “The very beginning of godliness, the very beginning of transformation in our lives and in our society, begins with our posture before the character of God.” What is the appropriate posture before God, and how does the Lord’s Prayer help us approach God that way?

- In *Whistling in the Dark*, Frederick Buechner writes, “‘Thy kingdom come . . . on earth’ is what we are saying. And if that were suddenly to happen, what then? What would stand and what would fall? . . . To speak those words is to invite the tiger out of the cage, to unleash a power that makes atomic power look like a warm breeze.” What are we asking when we pray for God’s kingdom to come on earth?
  - What aspects of this prayer come naturally to you when you pray? Which are harder to practice?
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### **For 5/8**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Prayer:** Read Psalm 145 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Of the four components of the ACTS model for prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication), adoration seems to be the part of prayer that is difficult for many people in the Reformed tradition. Is that true for you? If so, why do you think that is?
  - Do you struggle with the fact that God commands us to praise him? Many Christians do. In the article “[The Purpose of Praise](#),” David Koo writes, “In essence, God’s demand for us to praise Him is a call to join in the joy and celebration and loving adoration found within the Trinity. It is a call to join the Family. It is a call to joy!” How does this insight inform your perspective?
  - How might you incorporate more adoration and praise into your prayer life?
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### **For 5/15**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Prayer:** Read Psalm 130 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- At what times in your life have you felt that you were in “the depths”? Were you able to pray during those times? Why or why not?
  - The psalmist says, “I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits.” How might you practice this type of expectant waiting when you pray?
  - The psalmist seems to experience despair and hope simultaneously. What role does hope play in our prayers—and in other parts of our faith formation?
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## For 5/22

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Prayer:** Read Mark 9:14-24 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- This father's utterance, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" is an honest prayer. He's not trying to impress Jesus; he's asking Jesus to meet him where he is. In what areas of your faith do you experience doubt?
  - How is doubt handled in your church family? Is there room for people to experience both belief and unbelief as they grow in faith?
  - How might you incorporate this father's words into your own prayer life?
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## For 5/29

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Prayer:** Read Romans 8:26-27 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Next Sunday is Pentecost Sunday. As you anticipate celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit to Christian believers, think about the role of the Spirit in your prayer life. Do you ever pray directly to the third person of the Trinity? Why or why not?
  - How might the statement "we do not know what we ought to pray for" affect the way we pray or the things we ask God for?
  - In what specific ways do you think the Holy Spirit might be interceding for you, your loved ones, your congregation, your community, or our world?
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## For 6/5

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Wonder:** Read Acts 2:1-21 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- On this Pentecost Sunday, what do you wonder about the Acts 2 story? What surprises you or fills you with awe?
  - How might you have reacted if you were part of the international crowd in Jerusalem and you heard the Gospel message for the first time in your own language?
  - What do you find yourself wondering about in relation to how the Holy Spirit works in people's lives today?
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### **For 6/12**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Wonder:** Read Psalm 139 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- This song is an amazing expression of wonder. Read the first 18 verses. What wonderings does this passage prompt in you?
  - Do you often go through your day with this kind of wonder and awe? If not, what do you think hinders you? What practices might help you recapture a sense of childlike wonder more regularly?
  - What aspect of God’s character fills you with awe?
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### **For 6/19**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Wonder:** Read Luke 5:21-26 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Jesus knew the Pharisees’ thoughts before they said a word. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus knows you that way too?
  - If you were in the crowd that day, what would your first reaction to the healing be? Praise? Skepticism? Awe? Fear?
  - Describe a time when you were “filled with awe.” What prompted that emotion?
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### **For 6/26**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Wonder:** Read Revelation 21:1-5 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What do you wonder about the new heaven and the new earth?
  - What will it be like to have God dwelling among us for eternity?
  - What do you long for God to “make new” right now?
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### **For 7/3**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Remembering:** Read Deuteronomy 6:1-9 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- If you come from a family that loves God, how did the adults in your family pass along their love of God to the children?



- If you don't come from a family where faith was important, how has that impacted your own faith formation?
  - How might your church family help remind each other of all God has done?
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### **For 7/10**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Remembering:** Read Joshua 4:1-7 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- How have you, or how might you, use physical objects in your home or sanctuary to remind people of God's work in your life?
  - In what other ways do you, or does your church, help future generations remember the work of God?
  - How does telling God's story to younger generations strengthen your own faith formation?
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### **For 7/17**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Remembering:** Read Psalm 103 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What helps you remember the goodness of God?
  - If someone asked you to tell them about "all [God's] benefits" in your life, which benefits would you remember? What stands out in your past and in your family history?
  - Recall or tell about a time when God "crown[ed] you with love and compassion" or "satisfie[d] your desires with good things."
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### **For 7/24**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Remembering:** Read Luke 22:14-20 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What do you think the disciples would have remembered most about that Passover meal?
- What might help you remember the great depths of Jesus' sacrifice when you come to the Lord's Table?
- What might also help you remember the great joy of the resurrection?

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### **For 7/31**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Remembering:** Read Hebrews 11:1–12:2 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What do the actions of the people mentioned—such as Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses—have in common? What does it mean to act “by faith”?
- Do you have family “faith stories” that you tell about your parents or other ancestors? If so, what are they? How do you share them with younger generations?
- Who do you consider to be part of your “great cloud of witnesses,” as Hebrews 12 says? Consider making a list of all the people who have contributed to your faith formation.

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### **For 8/7**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Service:** Read Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- What does serving the Lord “with all your heart and with all your soul” mean to you?
- How would you know if you were indeed serving God with all your heart and soul? What might be different about your daily life? What might be the same?
- How would you describe this type of wholehearted service to a child?

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### **For 8/14**

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Service:** Read Mark 10:42-45 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- Do you know someone who is an example of a “servant-leader”? What do you think motivates that person?
  - In what areas of life are you a leader? How can you also serve in those areas?
  - How might you cultivate the heart of a servant in imitation of Jesus?
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## For 8/21

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Service:** Read John 13:3-5, 12-14 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- If you were one of the disciples, how do you think you would have felt when Jesus, the Son of God, began to wash your feet? Embarrassed? Unworthy? Awed? Other?
  - In what specific ways can we follow Jesus' example of servanthood, both individually and as members of a faith community?
  - Whose "feet" might you need to "wash"?
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## For 8/28

**Reflection and Discussion Starter—the Practice of Service:** Read James 2:14-17 and ponder or discuss the following questions. (For more on faith practices from Faith Formation Ministries, visit [bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject](http://bit.ly/FaithPracticesProject))

- How can we avoid the trap of "works righteousness"—of thinking that doing good deeds can secure our salvation?
  - Are you aware of how many people in your community struggle to obtain daily food? If not, find out. How might you help to address the root causes of food insecurity in your area?
  - Do you ever experience guilt feelings about not "doing enough"? How do you address those feelings? How do you balance service and sabbath?
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